

COMIC SHOP NEWS

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From

A-1 COMICS

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A Comics Specialty Outlet

First Comes #1, then #0

Dark Horse is releasing *Aliens Vs. Predator #1* in June—but a month later, they're following it up with *Aliens Vs. Predator #0*, a special 32-page comic book that gathers together the three *Aliens/Predator* installments from the pages of *Dark Horse Presents*. These stories serve as a prequel to the action that is highlighted in the *Aliens Vs. Predator* four-issue full-color limited series.

Aliens Vs. Predator #0 is a black-and-white comic by Randy Stradley and Phillip Norwood; ace artist Mike Mignola has contributed an all-new cover the the special prequel collection.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

Owlhoots Expands The Range of Westerns

When you say "western," most readers immediately think of the pre-Civil War Old West, filled with rugged John Wayne-like cowboys and monosyllabic Indians—in short, the sort of cliché that fills the pages of Western novels and B-movie scripts. James Vance and John Garcia know enough about the American West to know the truth behind the clichés, though. It's that truth that's the essence of *Owlhoots*, a new miniseries set for publication by Kitchen Sink beginning in August.

Owlhoots is the story of Tom McAlester and three other men, all former peacekeep-

ers in the Oklahoma territory of the 1880's and 90's. While the four worked on more-or-less the same side of the law, they weren't exactly friends; they have long-running conflicts that remain unresolved. The story doesn't take place in their heyday, however; instead, *Owlhoots* begins in 1914, when McAlester is inspired by a film about his contemporary Buffalo Bill to try to organize a film project concerning their exploits.

The quartet hires a fly-by-night tyro who promises to direct their movie—however, much of his time is devoted to staying out of the reach of the

Patents Trust, who will confiscate his camera equipment if they catch him. What little time he has left over is devoted to his lover, a brazen woman who is an embarrassment to the quartet of former heroes.

Owlhoots is a story of bygone glories and conflicting personalities; it is far from the traditional Western. James Vance and John Garcia, the creators of the series, have taken great pains to ensure the accuracy of the storyline.

Vance is the creator of the award-winning *Kings in Disguise* series; *Owlhoots* is his second comics project. John

Garcia has previously done work for *Creepy*, *Erle*, and *Open Space*, but his strong interest in the American West makes *Owlhoots* a perfect project for his talents.

To further accent the mood of *Owlhoots*, Kitchen Sink will publish the series in duotone color. The black and white artwork will be overprinted with a brown/sepia tone to help enhance the mood of this series.

Owlhoots #1, an August release, is priced at \$2.50. The series will run either five or six issues; the exact length of the run is currently undetermined.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

COMIC SHOP NEWS

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Deadline Undergoes Fusion With Atomeka Tor Returns In A1

Deadline, the popular British magazine best known by many for its Tank Girl series by Alan Martin and Jamie Hewlett, moves to Atomeka Press beginning with its 19th issue. Some changes will be evident immediately, but the next few issues will show even more of the direction in which Atomeka is taking the magazine.

"The first issue you can see our handy work is *Deadline #19*, which sports a new logo and eight pages of full color stripwork," Dave Elliott of Atomeka said. The magazine will continue to present its "old guard" as well, including the aforementioned Tank Girl; B-Bop and Lula by Steve Dillon; Johnny Nemo by Peter Milligan and Brett Ewins; Wired World by Philip Bond; A-Men by Shaky Kane; Timulo by D'Israeli; and Hugo Tate by Nick Abadzis.

Deadline #20 will feature Bob Burden's Flaming Carrot in a series of reprints that may lead to new Flaming Carrot tales later on. ("After that we may have some new Carrot stories especially for *Deadline*," Elliott said, "but that's up to Bob.") The origin of Flaming Carrot will be reprinted in *Deadline #20* (it originally appeared in Fantagraphics' *Anything Goes*); afterwards, the magazine will reprint the two-part "Witch Woman" story from *Cerebus*.

Deadline #23, the Halloween special issue, will feature an interview with Clive Barker and an interview with Peter Milligan and Brendan McCarthy about their forthcoming controversial graphic novel *Skin*; McCarthy also supplies the cover for that issue.

Atomeka also announced some of the contents for *A1 5*. This issue will feature a real surprise for longtime comics fans: Joe Kubert is writing and drawing an all-new Tor story for this issue! According to Elliott, "It will serve to reintroduce his character back into the public's attention as

he works on his *Tor* graphic novel." Other contributors to *A1 5* include such Kubert School graduates as Steve Bissette, Rick Veitch, Tom Yeates, and George Pratt. William Stout is supplying the cover for the issue; it is this cover upon which the Veitch-Yeates story is based.

While *A1 5* is a few months away from release, the *A1 True Life Bikini Confidential* is scheduled for next month. It will feature a Betty Page Portfolio illustrated by John Bolton, Mark Beachum, Alan Davis, Adam Hughes, Melinda Gebbie, Garry Leach, Mark Schultz, Bill Sienkiewicz, and Brian Bolland. There will also be a new Bojeffries Saga story, a new Mr. Monster story, and more in this July release. Elliott reports that contributors supplied so much high-quality material that Atomeka had to increase the pagecount for this issue from 80 to 88 pages—but they still kept the price at \$6.95.

by CLIFF BIGGERS



Australian Comics Success Story Comes to America in August

"*The Southern Squadron* is not just the best-selling Australian comic. It's the best-selling comic in Australia," said Dave Olbrich, publisher of Aircel. That's quite a difference; that means that *Southern Squadron* regularly outsells *Batman*, *X-Men*, and other top titles in the Land Down Under. Thus far, however, only a few Americans have ever had a chance to see the adventures of this quirky super-team. In August, Aircel remedies that by adding *Southern Squadron* to their line-up in a four-issue miniseries—and at the same time, the team will guest star in both *Boris the Bear* and *Grimjack*, making even more readers aware of their existence.

Dave de Vries is the creator/writer/artist of *Southern Squadron*; he first featured them in *Os Comics*, but later moved them to *Cyclone*, a new super-hero anthology series. The *Southern Squadron* became such a popular feature in the title that the book was renamed *Southern Squadron* with issue #9.

De Vries didn't conceive of the *Southern Squadron* as a superhero satire, but as a genuine Australian su-

perhero book in an Australian setting where the characters were real people. "*The Southern Squadron* is not the pseudo-gritty realism seen in the US superhero comics but the absurd almost pathetic reality which occurs when grown men are seriously expected to parade in public in tights and a mask," de Vries said.

So who are the *Southern Squadron*? "Take a beer-swilling Melbournean, a Serbian immigrant werewolf, a trendy Sydney fashion designer who can fly and a hard-nosed female commando, put them to work for the Australian government and what have you got? The *Southern Squadron*, Australia's own trouble shooters," de Vries said.

The team works for the Australian government; they're trained for terrorist strikes and threats of nuclear scuffle. Of course, since those events occur all too irregularly, the team occasionally succumbs to "disciplinary lapses."

The first issue of *Southern Squadron* pits them against a group of banished American superheroes, the A-Men. These X-Men-parodies should seem very familiar to American readers.

Creator reaction has been very strong in favor of *Southern Squadron*; Mike Grell is contributing the full-color cover and the introduction to the first issue, and such talents as Jerry Ordway, Paul Gulacy, John Ostrander, and James Hudnall will be contributing to the book. Gulacy was so pleased with the *Southern Squadron* that he teamed with de Vries to create a six-page story for the fourth issue.

"When US comics creators respond in such a positive manner to a title like *The Southern Squadron*," de Vries said, "it makes us anxious to see what the buying public thinks. We're looking forward to it."

Each issue of *The Southern Squadron* will be priced at \$2.25.

by CLIFF BIGGERS



NEWS BRIEFS



ELEKTRA POSTER WILL GIVE HER FANS A REAL CHARGE

Marvel's July posters are sure to excite even the most jaded comics fan; you might want to start planning your wall space now! The releases lead off with the **Moebius Elektra poster**, the fourth in a series of Moebius posters. Spidey fans will be able to decorate their walls with a poster of the cover to **Todd McFarlane's Spider-Man #1**. Zeck and Zimelman are supplying a **Captain America 50th Anniversary Poster**—and if you remember their Punisher posters, you know what a dynamic team these two guys are! Speaking of **Punisher**, he's also represented in July with a **Joe Jusko poster**. Finally, **Mignola and Chiarello** have created a **Fantastic Four poster** to celebrate Marvel's premiere title. Each of these posters will carry a \$5.95 pricetag; look for them all in mid-July.

SWAN GRACES SUPER-BOOKS

Curt Swan, the Superman artist for all of us who grew up in the fifties and sixties, makes a gala return to the Superman family of books in August and early September, illustrating all four Super-titles during that shipping month (you see, a DC shipping month runs from the week containing the second Tuesday in each month to the week containing the first Tuesday in the next month...oh, never mind).

Swan first appears in **Superboy #9**, set for August 16th release. This story, written by **John Moore**, introduces the Phantom Zone to the Superboy Universe. On August 23rd, **Superman #48** begins a three-part story, **The Sinbad Contract**. **William Messner-Loebs** is the writer for the three-parter that pits Superman against the Qura'i people's own super-powered champion, Sinbad. At the same time, a new LexCorp invention is stolen—and that promises trouble for the people of Metropolis! The story continues on August 30th in the pages of **Adventures of Superman #471**, and concludes on September 6th in **Action #658**.

GREEN HORNET NESTS ON TRADE PAPERBACK RACKS

Now Comics' hit **Green Hornet** series will spawn a trade paperback this September. This 128-page volume will reprint the entire Green Hornet saga that appeared in the first seven issues of the comic book series; these stories followed the Green Hornet from the end of Britt Reid II's last case through the downfall of the DeVane criminal empire and the emergence of the Green Hornet of the 90's. The series is written by **Ron Fortier** and illustrated by **Jeff Butler** and **David Mowry**. **Jim Steranko** will supply an original wraparound cover for the trade paperback. **The Green Hornet Trade Paperback** will be priced at \$11.95.

Early in 1991, Fortier and Butler will be reunited on a new limited series, **The Green Hornet Sting**. This series will star the first Green Hornet and Ikano Kato, from the 1940's radio serials, in a wartime battle against Nazi saboteurs with the life of President Roosevelt at stake.

Butler will pencil and ink the four-issue limited series.

YOU HAVE A DATE WITH LOVE AND ROCKETS

Well, maybe you won't actually have a date with Maggie Luba, or any of the other **Love and Rockets** characters, but you can keep up with important dates with the **1991 Love and Rockets Calendar** from Fantagraphics. This black and white calendar with a full-color cover features all-new **Hernandez Bros.** art done especially for this publication. The \$9.95 calendar is slated for August release.



RIP OFF SEES HIT POTENTIAL IN NEAR MYTHS

Trina Robbins did a variety of stories for **Epic** and other magazines in the early, middle, and late 1970's, and most of that material has been unavailable for a decade or two now. Since Trina Robbins has developed quite a fan following in the years following that material's original release, **Rip Off Press** has collected these early stories into **Near Myths**. **Near Myths** is a 36-page black and white comic with a full-color cover; it carries a "mature readers" advisory and is priced at \$2.50. Look for it in August.



NEXT NEXUS VEXES EX-NEXUS

It's been a couple of years since **Horatio Hellpop** wielded the power of **Nexus**—but this August brings **Horatio** back in his role of **Nexus** once again as he sets out to end the reign of terror of **Stanislaus Korivitsky**, his replacement. **Stan** has been killing indiscriminately, using his power unwisely, and bringing dishonor upon the name of **Nexus**; it's up to **Horatio**, who has sufficient experience with the **Nexus** power, to stop him. The showdown takes place in **Nexus #75**, on sale August 9th. **Mike Baron**, **Hugh Haynes**, and **Arne Starr** present the final confrontation—and fan-favorite artist **Steve Rude** returns to supply an all-new cover painting for this issue!

WHERE DO LESS POPULAR HEROES GO?

To hell, it seems!...at least, that's what **Hawk and Dove Annual #1**, on sale September 6th, seems to indicate. You see, a dimensional rift within **STAR Labs** is drawing **Star** personnel into the realms of hell—and the **Titans West** team (**Flamebird**, **Golden Eagle**, **Bumblebee**, and **Chris "Dial H for Hero" King**) is reunited along with **Hawk** and **Dove** to try to rescue the missing workers. When they get to hell, though, they find a group of dead supervillains waiting for them, including the **Iron Major**, **Clayface II**, the **Top**, **Iceicle**, **Electro-cutioner**, and **El Papagayo** (don't worry if you haven't heard of most of these guys—remember, they rarely kill off the really popular villains...). All of these guys want out of hell, and they're expecting **Hawk** and **Dove** and the **Titans West** team to bring them back to our world. If they have the power to free the villains, though, does that mean that **Hawk** can also bring back his brother, the original **Dove**?

But what about those lesser-known heroes mentioned earlier? Well, the **Haunted Tank** and former **Titans** **Mal** and **Lilith** will also guest-star in this storyline, along with every-

one's favorite demon, the **Demon**! **Hawk & Dove Annual #1**, a \$2.64-page comic, is slated for September 6th release. **Barbara** and **Karl Kesel**, **Dave Hoover** and **Tom Artis**, and **Willie Blyberg** bring you the whole story—and you know it's going to be a hot one!... (sorry, but we're having a devil of a time passing up these hell jokes...)

DICK TRACY GETS PAPERBACK TREATMENT

Dick Tracy: True Hearts & Tommy Guns is a 192-page trade paperback collecting all three of the **Disney Dick Tracy** prestige-format volumes into one book. This volume contains the two **John Moore** prequels plus the **Len Wein** movie adaptation, all illustrated by **Kyle Baker**. The **Disney** trade paperback is scheduled for August release; the trade paperback will be priced at \$12.95. Prior to that, **Disney** plans to offer standard-comics reprintings of the prestige-format editions, each priced at \$2.95.

MAGNUS GEARS UP FOR NEW ROBOT BATTLES

Magnus Robot Fighter, the **Russ Manning** comics gem from the early Silver Age that has been an almost-legendary fan favorite for decades, is one of the first dystopian-future comics ever created. Its story of a future in which robots control the world of 4000 AD was before its time; unfortunately, it has been in comics limbo for over a decade now.

In August, **Valliant Comics** will introduce a new comics generation to **Magnus Robot Fighter** via a seven-volume set of trade paperback reprinting the classic **Russ Manning** work. Each full-color trade paperback will be reproduced on high-quality white paper with cardstock covers. Each volume will be priced at \$7.95. In 1990, **Valliant Comics** will follow up the reprint series with an all-new series of adventures of **Magnus Robot Fighter**—and you can be sure that **CSN** will tell you all about 'em as soon as **Valliant** finalizes their plans!...

COMIC SHOP
NEWS

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NEWS BRIEFS

HELLBLAZER CELEBRATES MOTTER'S DAY

Dean Motter, the writer-artist of the *Prisoner* series for DC and the creator of *Mister X*, all too rarely displays his skills as a comics artist—but those of you who don't want to miss one of Motter's rare ventures into the world of stylish comics visuals will be pleased to hear that he is guest-illustrating *Hellblazer* #33, scheduled for July 26th release. The *Jamie Delano* story is set in a lull in Constantine's adventurous life—a lull that has him wondering where the horror has gone (if it were up to us, we'd just be happy for the brief respite!). Kent Williams supplies the painted cover for this issue.



THE GANG'S ALL HERE

Okay, Peter David's brought back the green Hulk. He's brought back Betty Ross. He's brought back the original Defenders. So what else do you want?

Did you say Rick Jones?

Awright! Rick Jones returns in *Incredible Hulk* #374, on sale August 23rd. He's not alone, though; he has a whole slew o' Skrulls on his tail, including the Super-Skrull. Be on hand for this gala green-guy issue, courtesy of Peter David, Dale Keown, and Bob McLeod.

THE RETURN OF DAREDEVIL

Daredevil is a time-honored name, long before there was a Marvel Comics hero who bore that name. Lev Gleason Comics published the adventures of another Daredevil; sometimes accompanied by the kid gang The Little Wise Guys, the earlier Daredevil faced off against his arch-nemesis The Claw, Hitler, and other menaces. It's been over thirty years since this Daredevil donned a costume to fight crime, though—and since Marvel has laid claim to the Daredevil name, you can rest assured you won't be seeing this original Daredevil return to comics any time soon...



However, you will see Reddevil make his comics debut in the pages of *Young Hero* #2, a 36-page black-and-white comic from AC. Reddevil is the new name for the character whose classic Golden Age costume will be instantly recognizable; he stars in an all-new origin story courtesy of Bill Black and Frank Turner. This issue will also reprint two Charles Biro *Little Wise Guys* stories from the early 1950's. Look for *Young Hero* #2 in August.



FLEETWAY GOES TO WAR

Third World War, a six-issue "docudrama" from Fleetway-Quality, isn't the Third World War you might expect. The Pat Mills-Carlos Ezquerro series is set in Latin America, where "a silent war is tearing down factories, schools, hospitals, and entire economies...it's already begun...Welcome to the real world." This grim six-issue miniseries will be presented in full painted color on coated stock with heavy board laminated covers; each issue will be priced at \$2.50.

BETTY BOOP'S SHINING KNIGHT

Milton Knight, the comics creator well known to fans for his work on the series *Hugo*, has signed to pencil First Comics' upcoming Betty Boop graphic novel, *Betty Boop's Big Break*. Knight joins writer Joshua Quagmire andinker-colorist Leslie Cabarga on the project. Knight's style, which harkens back to the style of the early animated cartoons, is well suited to this Betty Boop storyline; Knight was highly recommended by Cabarga, who is the author of *The Fleischer Story* and an expert on "the Fleischer look."



Betty Boop's Big Break is an all-new romp through depression-era Cony Island that's sure to please long-time fans of Betty Boop, and will serve as a fine introduction to the character for those who are familiar with her only through her brief appearance in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*?

Betty Boop's Big Break is set for fall release; the 48-page full color prestige-format one-shot is priced at \$5.95.

SCARLET WITCH STARS IN MCP FOR A SPELL

Richard Howell, the artist of the *Vision* and *Scarlet Witch* limited series, brings the Scarlet Witch to *Marvel Comics Presents* in a four-part storyline that runs in *MCP* #60-63. The storyline involves psychic time-travel, which merges the Scarlet Witch's psyche with one of her ancestors, a high seas pirate. The Scarlet Witch is more popular than ever in light of the Dark Scarlet Witch storyline in the pages of *Avengers West Coast*; this storyline will be a must-have for all those Wanda-fans.

THE PAPERBACK RACKS GETS LONELY-ER

A Lonely Place of Dying, the five-part story that introduced Tim Drake (the new Robin), was a mega-hit last summer; it gets a chance to relive its mega-hit status this August when it appears as a bargain trade paperback in the same format as *A Death in the Family*. The 128-page full-color standard-format trade paperback reprints all five parts of the story from *Batman* 440-442 and *New Titans* 60-61. Denny O'Neil has written a new introduction for the book, and George Perez has designed a new cover. *A Lonely Place of Dying* is set for August 23rd release, and is priced at only \$3.95.

GRIMJACK CASEFILES LEAVES TRUMAN

FANS DEWEY-EYED

Were you one of the unfortunates who missed the early Grimjack stories that appeared in the pages of *Starslayer*? Feeling glum that you never had a chance to see all that lovely Tim Truman artwork? Well, cheer up, bunky--*Grimjack Casefiles* is helping you fill the tragic void in your comics-fan life by reprinting all those early stories by Ostrander and Truman. *Grimjack Casefiles* #2, on sale August 9th, reprints thirty pages of Grimjack adventures from the pages of *Starslayer* #14-16, all contained within a Steve Pugh cover. Wotta bargain for \$1.95!

DARK HORSE DEALS OUT SOME CARDS

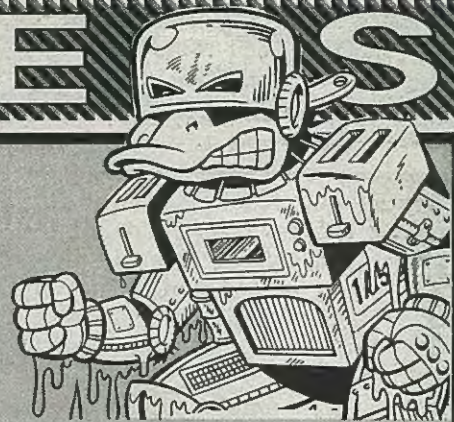
Card collectors take note: Dark Horse Comics knows that you're out there! In fact, they have an offer you can't refuse. They're going to give you, absolutely free of charge, twenty five different Dark Horse trading cards featuring work by some of Dark Horse's best talents, including Paul Chadwick, Arthur Adams, Tim Vigil, Chris Warner, Mike Kaluta, and more. Even better, Dave Stevens will be contributing an all-new Rocketeer illustration to the set. So what's the catch?...

Well, while the cards are free of charge, you can only find them in the pages of Dark Horse comics shipping from August through November of 1990. Each comic will include two cards at no extra charge. This is your chance to complete the entire set—and enjoy some top-notch comics at the same time!

NBM WINS THE BATTLE FOR FOREVER WAR

Joe Haldeman's award-winning science fiction novel *The Forever War* has been adapted into comics by Belgian artist Mark Van Oppen, who works under the name Marvano. Dark Horse Comics will present the story in serialized black-and-white form in *Cheval Noir* beginning with the eighth issue—but NBM Graphics has won the battle to secure the rights for the color reprintings of the series, and they will release the entire story in three graphic novels beginning in November.

The Forever War draws from Haldeman's experiences in Vietnam; it is the story of a man who finds himself drawn into a war with an alien race—a war that he is unable to understand as he finds himself killing for glory and flag. The novel has been adapted into a play and has just been optioned for a movie by Richard Edlund, who won four Oscars for special effects on the *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* films. Each NBM volume of *The Forever War* will be priced at \$8.95. A special leather-bound collectors edition signed and numbered by Haldeman and Marvano will also be released later.

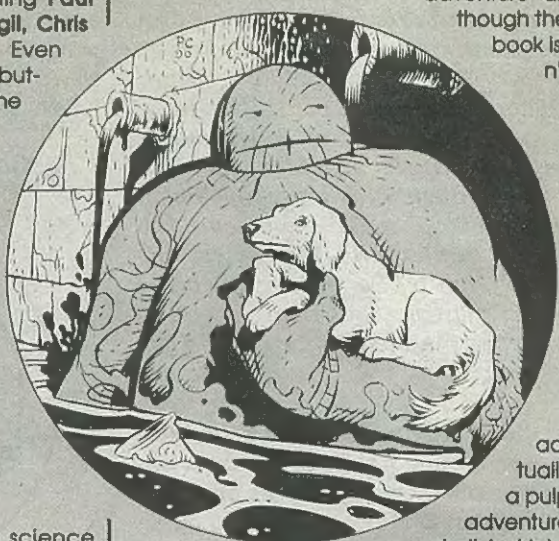


SUPER DUCK FACES FOUL MENACES

Super Duck returns in July in the pages of *Laugh* #24—but it isn't the Super Duck you might remember. Instead, this is the son of the original Super Duck, who has adopted his father's heroic persona. Super Duck teams up with Sabrina's magical cat, Salem, to save Riverdale from the ecologically-created menace of Robo-Duck. This story captures the funny-animal feel of the 40's adventures while presenting a message more important than ever in the 90's. Jeff Rovin is the writer for *Laugh* #24; he is joined by *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* artist Dave Garcia. Look for *Laugh* #24 on July 19th.

WORDSMITH PLIES HIS TRADE AT CALIBER

Wordsmith, the critically-acclaimed series by Dave Darigo and R.G. Taylor, has been absent from comic racks since the demise of Renegade Press. This summer will bode well for *Wordsmith* fans, however; not only will Special Studios begin a new series, *Heroes From Wordsmith*, but Caliber Press is offering two collections of *Wordsmith* stories gathering together the entire twelve-issue run of the series. The first volume of *Wordsmith* will appear in July. It will chronicle the career of Clay Washburn, pulp writer who aspires to be a famous writer. It's a story steeped in the pulp era, and one sure to please fans of pulp adventure—although the book isn't



actually a pulp adventure at all, but is instead a compelling story of ambition. Each volume of *Wordsmith* will be priced at \$14.95.

JAXON EXPLORES THE OPTIMISM OF YOUTH

Jack Jackson, the underground comics artist whose work is better known under his pen name Jaxon, has been renowned as one of the best underground talents. Fantagraphics will collect his work into two trade paperback volumes this year and next year; each trade paperback will be organized by theme. The first volume, *Optimism of Youth*, collects his horror, satire, and science fiction work from a variety of underground comics. The 100-page black-and-white trade paperback is intended for adult readers only; it is priced at \$11.95. Fantagraphics will also release a signed and numbered softcover priced at \$14.95. Next year, *God's Bosom and Other Stories*, the companion volume to *Optimism of Youth*, will collect Jaxon's historical pieces in the same format.

CSN SPOTLIGHT

Mark Verheiden is the writer who proved that good films could be translated into good comic books--and his *Aliens* pretty much set the pattern for modern film-inspired comics. While *Aliens* is his best-known project, it's far from his only successful project: Mark made his initial splash in the comics field with *The American*, a complex, sometimes cynical look at the concept of the government-created patriotic hero. Verheiden is also the writer of the screenplay for the Joel Silver production of *The American*.

Today, Verheiden is a busy writer; in addition to his projects for Dark Horse Comics, he is also the co-creator and co-writer on *Stalkers*, a series that he and Jan Strnad do each month for Marvel's Epic Comics. At DC, he has worked on the *Phantom* in the past--

fore. He's a little more serious here than he was in his *Hulk*. When we went into the third series, I made a conscious decision to play to Sam's strengths. He does a very dark EC sort of horror style; he has more in common with Mark Nelson's storytelling style than with Beauvais'. He has this really elegant, fine feathering ink style. It lends itself to the Wrightson feel that you can see in the early *Swamp Thing*--or the later *Swamp Thing*, for that matter.

We've come up with a pretty dark story where Ripley, Newt, and Hicks are all trying to resolve the demons that have been plaguing them

If there's a secret in my success, it's that I take the subject matter very seriously. That comes from both the writer's point of view and the publisher's point of view. I don't mean this to sound egotistical, I really don't, but Dark Horse put good people on the book; these comics weren't knock-offs, they weren't a licensed deal to get out of the way--the Dark Horse people took these books very seriously. I think it didn't hurt that my background is screenwriting, so what I tried to bring to *Aliens* and *Predator* was the same feel, at least translated to comics, that you might get watching

Here's what I can tell you about the schedule: I've been done with the series for about three weeks. The first issue is finished and prepped, all four scripts are in, the second issue is drawn, so we're hoping we can get this one out on time. The first issue and second issue were solicited as bimonthly, but after that, *Aliens: Earth War 3 & 4* will come out monthly. Now that Dark Horse has Diana Schutz and Bob Schreck and other people working there, I think you'll see a new emphasis on timeliness.

While we're talking about timeliness, I'm sure that some of the readers are eager to find out about the signed hardcover limited editions of *Aliens Collection Volume One*...

I wish I could say that they were all

most ready, but

Mark Verheiden

by Cliff Biggers

but his most current project has still more film roots.

And yes, Mark, I almost wrote this entire introduction without saying a word about *Terror Squad*--even though Mick Martin & Marsha Porter, editors of *Video Movie Guide*, are right in describing it as a "better-than-average action movie" that "offers some thrills & style despite its low budget"...*Aliens III* is bringing Ripley back; we're going to have some fun with her in the *Earth War* series. It's being drawn by Sam Kieth; it's being done in full color, but Sam's working in pen and ink then it'll be done in color.

The third *Aliens* series, *Earth War*, has you working with artist Sam Kieth; weren't there reports at one time that Hedden & McWeeney would do an *Aliens* series?

Yes; we had talked to Hedden & McWeeney at one point, but things didn't gel; if it had worked out, they would have actually handled the art on the second series, the series that Denis Beauvais did. To begin with, we didn't have a conscious plan to use a different artist for each *Aliens* series, but after Nelson and Beauvais, [Dark Horse publisher] Mike Richardson decided that it made sense to change the artist on each of the new series. Happily, he didn't feel like changing the writer at the same time...

Sam Kieth seems to be getting a good deal of visibility, what with *Epicurus the Sage*, his issue of the *Hulk*, and now *Aliens: Earth War*.

It seems like Sam's year... I don't think anyone's seen Sam's work like this be-

throughout this whole series--and I'm not just referring to the *Aliens*. *Aliens: Earth War* does wrap up the series, by the way; whether Newt and these other characters come back again is up in the air, but this series is a wrap-up for this ongoing storyline. If Newt, Hicks, and Ripley return in the future, it'll be in a very different story.

Human Target Special



But as far as future *Aliens* stories are concerned, I don't know what I'm going to do right now.

I am plotting a third *Predator* series; I didn't do the second series--it's written by John Arcudi and illustrated by Neil Hansen, aka Spyder. I'll be doing the third series, which will bring back the characters from the first series, Schafe and his friend; there's going to be an incident involving *Predators* in the Soviet Union. It'll start upping the ante in the Cold War--sort of an anti-glasnost issue, I guess. You'll see more *Predator*.

the movie.

I don't believe that comics are like frozen movies--I've heard that too much. When I write comics, I play to comic strengths, which are many. I try to bring a stronger sense of dialogue and a stronger story than what you've seen in the past. Then again, they gave me superb artists--and that doesn't hurt comics sales at all. Maybe that's the real secret after all--great art...

I never thought of *Aliens* and *Predator* as stories being written for possible filming, so I was able to do things that couldn't be done on film. There are scenes in *Aliens* and *Predator* that might cost a hundred million dollars to film, but it only costs a few cents worth of ink to put them on the page.

If you thought the first two series would have been difficult to film, wait until you see *Aliens: Earth War*. In the new series that Sam's drawing, there are a lot of *Aliens*. For instance, in one sequence I have a huge battle between a bunch of earth people wearing those giant loader suits from the second *Aliens* film--there's a whole army of those guys going after a whole army of *Aliens* on the *Aliens*' home world. I'd hate to look at budget figures for that sequence if someone tried to film it...

There are also new *Aliens* in this storyline that we haven't seen before. John Bolton has created a new *Alien* design that's really pretty disgusting--it's in the Geiger tradition, but it's an all-new design, a major-league *Alien*. If you think the other ones were tough, just wait for this...

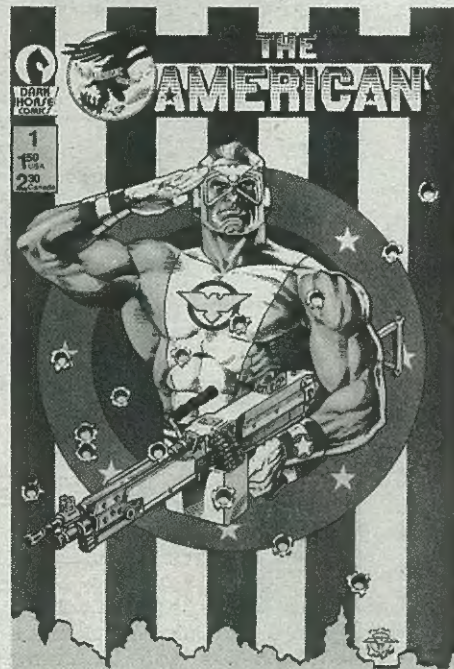
Will fans get a chance to see this new series on schedule? If there's been any complaint at all about *Aliens*, it's concerned the irregular release schedule.

that isn't true. I haven't even begun signing the limited editions. I think this would be Dark Horse's first hardcover, and I think that what you're seeing are the attendant problems that come with doing something new and trying to do it right.

What about your own creation, *The American*? Does Dark Horse have any plans for more *American* stories?

Certainly, although the biggest *American* project I've been working on isn't for comics at all--it's for film. I've just finished the first draft of the *American* screenplay for Warner Brothers, it's being produced by Joel Silver. That's been very interesting; I'm hoping to get involved in some more film work.

There's a black and white *American Special* due out this summer; it's totally done, and it wraps up the story-



CSN SPOTLIGHT

line that's been left hanging for about a year and a half. It has some pretty interesting extra material, too--stuff I had fun with. It has some comedic pages that show the American in different periods of his history; there's a parody of a Hostess twinkie ad, a jibe at the *Arkham Asylum* style of comics.

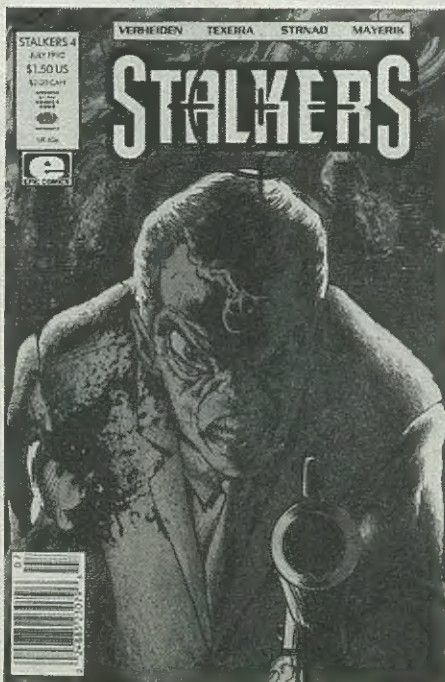
I have plans with Dougie Braithwaite to do another mini-series, hopefully for 1991 publication. I definitely want to bring the American back for that one--I have a great idea for a four issue mini-series. The basic idea is two-fold: I want to do something involved with American politics and its media emphasis, as well as doing another American story. I'm going to have Hough become press secretary to the Governor of California, who's running for office. The Governor has cynically done this to use the American's reputation, through Hough, to help him get elected. Unfortunately, the American, who's sort of at a loss following the events of the first story, becomes prey to a kind of a mind cult in the desert. This doesn't work into the governor's plans at all...and the resolution of that is the story.

Let's switch publishers: tell us about *Stalkers*.

Stalkers is co-created and co-written with Jan Strnad. We've split the book down the middle. What we're trying to do is have fun in a cynical, violent, politically crazy sort of way with our version of 1998 America. If I had any

thoughts on the first issues, all I would say is that I think I'm going to take it even further than you see it in the first issues. I'm going to really start honing in on the topics that interest me.

One upcoming issue I'm working on is set in Los Angeles in 1998-99; the Los Angeles we postulate is one where air conditioning is illegal, but crack is legal. So the crack dealers are gone, but they've been replaced by bootleg freon dealers hawking freon on the street-corner. After all, inn LA, if you're not cool, lots of terrible things start happening. What'll happen in this story, basically, is that someone is



"My hat's off to Mr. Moroto"
"Good show, gentlemen"
"Terrific stuff!"



With praise like this, maybe YOU should be reading ATLANTIS CHRONICLES™. And, to make it easier for you to start, ATLANTIS CHRONICLES #5 has a special, two page illustrated text that recaps the first four issues. If that doesn't persuade you, consider what the pros say about it:

"An inventive retelling on a classic tale, full of intrigue, sibling devilry, disasters, beasties and good old fashioned heroics, aided and abetted by Esteban Moroto's beautiful art. Terrific stuff." —Jim Starlin

"ATLANTIS CHRONICLES—the graphic epic by the mordant Peter David, illustrated in the grand manner by Esteban Moroto—tells the tale of the lost realm as I'd often hoped it might be told. Good show, gentlemen." —Roger Zelazny

"Peter has done some of his best work to date... Esteban has the ability to convey grace and beauty. My hat is off to Mr. Moroto." —Todd McFarlane

"This preview is almost like getting the first four issues FREE!!" —Bob Greenberger
 Editor, ATLANTIS CHRONICLES

ATLANTIS
 CHRONICLES™



CSN CHARTS

TOP 50 COMICS

CSN's Top Seller charts are based on figures supplied by the two major distributors, Diamond Distribution and Capital City Distribution, as well as figures by a cross-section of comics specialty shops. The distributor's figures represent retailer orders placed on the titles, while the information from stores represents copies sold.

1. Batman 450
2. Batman 451
3. Detective 617
4. X-Men Annual 14
5. X-Men 264
6. X-Men 263
7. Amazing Spider-Man 334
8. Amazing Spider-Man 335
9. Legends of the Dark Knight 8
10. Wolverine 27
11. Wolverine 26
12. X-Factor Annual 5
13. New Mutants Annual 6
14. Fantastic Four Annual 23
15. Detective 618
16. Ghost Rider 3
17. Green Lantern: Emerald Dawn 2
18. New Warriors 1
19. Aliens II 4
20. What If? 15
21. X-Factor 56
22. Punisher 35
23. Punisher War Journal 21
24. Web of Spider-Man 66
25. New Mutants 91
26. Iron Man 258
27. Spectacular Spider-Man 166
28. Avengers 319
29. Punisher Armory 1
30. Excalibur 24
31. Captain America 372
32. Demon 1
33. Namor the Sub-Mariner 4
34. Deathlok 1
35. Captain America 373
36. Avengers West Coast 60
37. Fantastic Four 342
38. Incredible Hulk 371
39. Marvel Comics 54
40. Marvel Comics 53
41. Hawkworld 2
42. Silver Surfer 39
43. Justice League Europe 16
44. X-Men Spotlight 2
45. Guardians of the Galaxy 2
46. Justice League America 40
47. Doctor Strange 19
48. Shade the Changing Man 1
49. RoboCop 5
50. Daredevil 282

TOP DOLLAR COMICS

The following comics, graphic novels and trade paperbacks were given Top Dollar ratings based on the dollar volume of the copies sold (or are expected to sell) during the late May and June sales period.

1. X-Men Annual 14
2. Legend of the Dark Knight 8
3. X-Factor Annual 5
4. New Mutants Annual 6
5. Wolverine 27
6. Wolverine 26
7. Fantastic Four Annual 23
8. Batman 450
9. Batman 451
10. Aliens II 4
11. Detective 617
12. Deathlok 1
13. X-Men 264
14. X-Men 263
15. Amazing Spider-Man 334
16. Amazing Spider-Man 335
17. X-Men Spotlight 2
18. Punisher War Journal 21
19. Detective 618
20. Ghost Rider 3
21. What If? 15
22. Green Lantern: Emerald Dawn 2
23. Punisher Army 1
24. Excalibur 24
25. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Movie Adaptation (Mirage Edition)
26. New Warriors 1
27. X-Factor 56
28. Punisher 35
29. Web of Spider-Man 66
30. Classics Illustrated 10: Call of the Wild
31. Demon 1
32. New Mutants 91
33. Ring 4
34. Iron Man 258
35. Spectacular Spider-Man 166
36. Avengers 319
37. Captain America 372
38. Hawkworld 2
39. Namor the Sub-Mariner 4
40. Marvel Comics 54
41. Marvel Comics 53
42. Captain America 373
43. Avengers West Coast 60
44. Doctor Strange 19
45. Shade the Changing Man 1
46. Fantastic Four 342
47. RoboCop 5
48. Incredible Hulk 371
49. Akira 21
50. Silver Surfer 39

TOP 10 BLACK & WHITE COMICS

1. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Movie Adaptation (Mirage)
2. Black Magic 1
3. Lone Wolf & Cub 33
4. Rock & Roll Comics 13: Led Zeppelin
5. Dark Horse Presents 39
6. Cerebus 133
7. Cheval Noir 7
8. Crying Freeman 7
9. Destroyer 9
10. Bizarre Heroes 1



TOP TEN NON-COMICS

The Top Ten Non-Comics is based on number and not dollar value. This category includes graphic novels, trade paperbacks, periodicals, etc. It includes books that actually were on sale during the May sales period.

1. Silver Surfer: The Enslavers
2. Collected TMNT Volume 1 (Mirage)
3. V For Vendetta TPB
4. Sandman TPB
5. Wilderness Book 2: The Borderland
6. Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide
7. Amazing Heroes Swimsuit Issue
8. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Volume 1 (TPB First)
9. Prisoner TPB
10. Spirit Casebook

CSN SPOTLIGHT

knocking off Stalkers--and the head of the LA franchise is eager to find out who's doing it. All that is kind of wrapped around this dismal world-view of where LA's gone in 1999. The head of the LA stalkers sees the world as a cesspool, but he loves it because he makes a mint out of it; he's busy 24 hours a day in LA, and he doesn't want to lose money by having his Stalkers picked off one by one.



When we pitched Stalkers to Marvel, we wanted to do a book that wasn't hinged on a main character. We didn't want to be tied to the hero concept; the Stalkers were the hero, and different people wear the uniform. Some are good at what they do, some are bad, some are incompetent; this gives us a chance to tell a lot of different stories. *Anthology* is a dirty word in comics, but with *Stalkers*, we're trying to do a subversive--can I say it?--anthology title. This doesn't mean that some characters won't come back; we're going to start a letters page with *Stalkers* #6 and we'll encourage people to let us know who they want us to bring. Then we'll ignore all of their requests and do what we want, of course--only kidding, guys!...

Have you seen anything in this issue of *Comic Shop News* that you can't live without? Make sure you don't miss it; clip this handy coupon and write down the things that you want you comics shop owner to be sure to get for you!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I gotta have 'em! Please reserve for me the following items mentioned in *Comic Shop News*!

Be sure to give this to your retailer. Do not send it to CSN! Your comics shop will make every effort to get the items you want; some items may require a down payment before your shop owner can get them for you; be sure to ask!

BATMAN™

by Loeb, Infantino & Nyberg

GOTHAM CITY IS SAVED.
JASON WHILBY IS DEAD...
AND THE JOKER IS IMMOBILIZED BY INSANITY.
LOEB, CINFAR, NYBERG

EVERY WEEK SOME NEW HORROR SEEMS TO CRAWL FROM THE BOWELS OF THE CITY.
AND YET WE BEAT THEM BACK.
WE CAN ONLY DO OUR BEST.
YES. AND PRAY.

I WON'T FORGET WHAT YOU DID FOR THE CITY, BATMAN.
WHILBY WAS CONSUMED BY THE CHAOS HE CREATED.
LOEB, CINFAR, NYBERG

OH... AND THAT FOP, BRUCE WAYNE, JOINED WHILBY UNDER PRESSURE FROM ME. I NEEDED A LISTENING POST.
POOR, WEAK-WILLED BRUCE. DON'T WORRY. I WON'T HAVE HIM PROSECUTED.
THANK YOU.

JASON WHILBY DIED TRYING TO DESTROY THIS CITY...
HE ATTEMPTED TO USE OUR FEAR OF CRIME TO INSTITUTE A FASCIST CONSPIRACY...
I WAS SEDUCED BY MY OWN AMBITION INTO JOINING WITH HIM...
SO I AM RESIGNING AS DISTRICT ATTORNEY.
WELL, THAT'S THE SPEECH. WHAT DO YOU THINK?
INTERESTING, HARVEY.
LOEB, CINFAR, NYBERG

SO YOU REALLY MEAN TO RESIGN AS D.A., HARVEY?
YES. I HAVE NO CHOICE.
I DOUBT THE MAYOR'LL ACCEPT IT. YOU'RE THE FIRST D.A. IN FIFTEEN YEARS WHO'S NOT CORRUPT!
I LET THE DARK SIDE OF MY SOUL CONTROL ME, BRUCE. THAT'S CORRUPTION ENOUGH!

AT LEAST THE JOKER AND HIS CONVICT ARMY ARE BEHIND BARS.
YEP. D'YOU REMEMBER DUKE MCGEE...WHO STOPPED THE BOMBING OF THE SCHOOL BUS?
YES. HE CLAIMED HE'D BEEN FRAMED ORIGINALLY. SO...?
I THOUGHT I MIGHT HIRE HIM A LAWYER.
AFTER ALL... HE MAY REALLY BE INNOCENT.
BRUCE, YOU ARE SUCH A HAPPY IDIOT!

WHAT DO YOU THINK, ALICE? SHOULD I RESIGN?
AND DO WHAT, LOVERBOY? CARVE DRIFTWOOD INTO SEAGULLS? YOU LOVE THE LAW!
AND AFTER ALL, HARVEY... YOU DON'T WANT THE BATMAN TO GET ALL THE GLORY, DO YOU?

LOEB, CINFAR, NYBERG

CSN SPOTLIGHT

Do you think the newsstand experiment with the first two issues of *Stalkers* helped the book develop an audience?

I was happy to see it on the newsstands; *Stalkers* is the very first book I've ever done that's been on the newsstand. I was happy to have a book of mine hit the 7-11; I take that as a great personal accomplishment. It was an experiment on Marvel's part, and I don't know if it was successful, but I think the idea behind it was that they wanted to encourage people who had found it on the newsstand to keep looking for it on direct sales racks--maybe they could steer a few people into comics shops. After the second issue, *Stalkers* went direct only.

It's the toughest Code book that we can possibly do--the series is staying under the Comics Code, even though it's direct-sales. The Code is pretty restrictive at times; they've blown out some of what we've done. They're concerned about certain kinds of violence--and they've very concerned about language. I sometimes find the code restrictions "interesting to work under," shall we say?... It's a challenge, in a way, to try to do a tough book that *doesn't* sell its toughness with gratuitous obscenity or sex. We're walking a line here, and I can't really say how successful it is because I'm so closely involved, but reaction seems to be good.



As long as I'm doing this book, I'm going to go crazy with it and make it as entertaining and funny as I can. If that catches on, great, and if it doesn't--well, better a noble failure than an...well, than an *ignoble* failure... I really am having as much fun as I can possibly have on *Stalkers*, though, and I know Jan is, too.

So you're busy at Marvel and Dark Horse--what about DC?

I'm still working for DC once in a while; I just did a *Human Target Special* that's going to be drawn by Dick Giordano. It'll be coming out in September or so, to coincide with the *Human Target* tv-film that uses some of the gadgetry and gimmickry that is developed for the series. The *Human Target* is this guy who's gone into practice for

himself; his job is to put on make-up and take the place of someone who's been targeted for assassination. He hopes to find the assassin and stop him before he gets killed, of course. In the film, they have some high-tech things that show how he comes up with this very elaborate make-up, how he learns to imitate someone's voice, and things like that. He has his own private jet now, three partners who help him out, and the whole works. The key concept is the idea of becoming another person; there are comedic things that can happen out of that, and there is very serious jeopardy that can come out of that. What I tried to do, to some extent, was show that there are certain limitations to what the *Human Target* can do. He's never going to play a midget, or a 90-pound woman, or Wilt Chamberlain. We try to keep it reasonable--as reasonable as we can, anyway. He's



playing a middle range of who he can become.

I don't know if it's going to become an ongoing series or not. Brian Augustyn said that if the show goes to se-

ries, there's a shot at the book becoming a series as well. Either way, *The Human Target* was a fun thing to do; I enjoyed writing about him because he's fallible and non-powered--and I hope that's not a negative thing in this comics world.

So you're not interested in writing a super-powered character book?

I never say never, but I really have a problem working with really powered characters. It's difficult for me to find a human fallibility in someone who can destroy the world by blinking. So no, I don't have any plans right now to write any super-powered hero comic books.

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now.



SPIDER-MAN® #1

By Todd McFarlane

A web of wonder has just been woven.

Get caught in it.

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